

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 are presented in this case. Claims 1-7 have been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-2 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki (U.S. Patent No. 7,009,722) in view of Imaizumi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,816,618; hereinafter “Imaizumi”); Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki in view of Imaizumi and further in view of Minamino (U.S. Patent No. 6,204,934); and Claims 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki and Imaizumi in view of Kato (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0012397).

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-2 and 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki in view of Imaizumi, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 recites novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied references. The claim amendments find support in original Claims 1-7; page 14, lines 1-4; page 21, lines 10-16; and page 27, lines 11-21 of the specification. No new matter has been added.

Briefly recapitulating, amended Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus including, *inter alia*:

...a communication interface configured to transmit the image data of the first data format together with the image data of the second data format as reference image data for the image data of the first data format to an external device.

In an exemplary embodiment of Applicants' image processing apparatus, a plurality of types of input image data are compressed in a first data format and stored, and image data

for reference obtained by converting the first data format of the stored data to a second data format being a general data format is transmitted together with the stored image data of the first data format to an external device. Thus, if an external device receiving the data has a general processing function, it is possible to easily identify the contents of the received data and use the stored data without degradation of the data. Consequently, the claimed device advantageously improves the usability of the data such that the reference image data can be used as backup data.¹

Nishigaki describes an image processing apparatus for storing image data in a memory, reading stored image data from a memory, and generating printed data.² However, Nishigaki fails to teach or suggest “a communication interface configured to transmit the image data of the first data format together with the image data of the second data format as reference image data for the image data of the first data format to an external device,” as in Applicants’ amended independent Claim 1.

In Nishigaki, an image processing apparatus includes a first compression means for accomplishing compression by a first compression method which allows image editing in a compressed state, and a second compression means for accomplishing compression by a second compression method which does not allow image editing in a compressed state. Nishigaki also describes a memory control means for selecting a compression method according to a designated image size and storing in memory the image data compressed by the selected compression method.³ The memory control means selects the second compression method after the first compression method when the designated size is larger

¹ See page 27, lines 11-21 of the specification.

² See Nishigaki at column 1, lines 17-23.

³ See Nishigaki at column 2, lines 19-22.

than a specific size of a printout sheet, and selects only the first compression method when the designated image size is smaller than the specific size of the printout sheet.⁴

After image data has been compressed by either the first compression method, or the first compression method followed by the second compression method, the data is outputted to be stored in frame memory 22.⁵ Thus, in Nishigaki either compressed image data created by the first compression method or compressed image data created by first compression method and further compressed by the second compression method is transmitted to memory 22. The compressed image data created by the first compression method and the compressed image data created by the first compression method followed by the second compression method are not both transmitted together to the memory 22.

In contrast, in Applicants' Claim 1, image data of the first data format (a compressed data format) and image data of the second data format *are transmitted together* by the communication interface to an external device. Nishigaki does not describe transmitting image data of a first data format together with image data of a second data format. Nishigaki only describes transmitting a first type of compressed data after it has undergone the first compression method (i.e. fixed-length compression method) and transmitting a second type of compressed data after it has undergone the first compression method followed by the second compression method (i.e. variable-length compression method). Thus, in Nishigaki only one type of compressed image data is transmitted.

Further, in Nishigaki, data is not transmitted to an *external device* but to an internal device (i.e. a memory). In Nishigaki, either the first type of compressed data or the second type of compressed data is transmitted to the memory 22 located within the print image controller unit that is contained in the image forming apparatus.⁶

⁴ See Nishigaki at column 2, lines 33-41.

⁵ See Nishigaki at column 4, lines 45-49 and 56-61.

⁶ See Nishigaki at column 3, lines 22-41.

Page 3 of the outstanding Official Action cites Imaizumi for describing a communication interface. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Imaizumi also fails to teach or suggest transmitting the image data of the first data format together with the image data of the second data format as reference image data for the image data of the first data format to an external device.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 1, and all claims depending therefrom, patentably distinguish over Nishigaki and Imaizumi.

In response to the rejection of Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki in view of Imaizumi and further in view of Minamino, Applicants respectfully submit that Minamino fails to cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Nishigaki and Imaizumi. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 3 is dependent on independent Claim 1, and is thus believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), be withdrawn.

In response to the rejection of Claims 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishigaki in view of Imaizumi and further in view of Kato, Applicants respectfully submit that Kato fails to cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Nishigaki and Imaizumi. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 4 and 7 are dependent on independent Claim 1, and are thus believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of Claims 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, and in light of the above discussion, the pending claims as presented herewith are believed to be in condition for formal allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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